aircraft or whenever these become operationally unsustainable due to various reasons.

Mandatory HIV test for JCOs and other ranks

776. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the defence headquarters proposes to make HIV test mandatory for those who want to become Junior Commissioned Officers and other ranks in the army;

(b) if so, when it is likely to be implemented; and

(c) whether all army centers are equipped with HIV testing facilities?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) A proposal to make Human Immuno deficiency Virus (HIV) test mandatory for new entrants into the Army is under consideration.

(b) No specific time-frame can be indicated.

(c) All the Army Hospitals are equipped with HIV testing facilities.

Increase in Aids cases amongst Indian soldiers

†777. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an increase in the cases of AIDS amongst Indian soldiers;

(b) if so, the number of soldiers who died of AIDS during the last two years and the number of soldiers infected with the said disease at present;

(c) whether any action plan has been made by the Government to make soldiers aware in this regard so that they can remain safe against this disease; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) There is no increase in Human Immuno deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) cases amongst the Indian soldiers. Government has made in action plan to make the soldiers and their families aware about HIV/AIDS. Some of the activities undertaken in this regard are as under:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.